

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, the Abstract, specification, and claims 1, 3-9 and 11-16 are amended, and claims 17-20 are added. The Abstract, specification and claims are amended for clarification purposes only. No new matter is added. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims and the drawings. Withdrawal of the rejections in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 5-10 and 13-16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,233,718 to Hardaway et al. (hereinafter "Hardaway"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a water supply apparatus for a washing machine. Independent claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, a first hose connecting portion provided at the detergent box, a second hose connecting portion provided at the inlet valve, and an inlet hose having a first end connected to the first hose connecting portion and a second end connected to the second hose connecting portion. Claim 1 recites that the second hose connecting portion is disposed higher than the first hose connecting portion such that at least a portion of the inlet hose is disposed at a slant between the first and second hose connecting portions. Independent claim 9 recites similar features in varying scope. Hardaway neither discloses nor suggests at least such features, let alone the respective claimed combinations of features.

Hardaway discloses a washing machine with an improved rinsing system. Water to be supplied to a tub 34 flows from external water supply inlets 40, 42 through mixing valves 44, 45

and conduit 48, through valves 72, 74, 76 and conduits 66, 68, 70, and into dispensers 60, 62, 64, respectively. The valves 72, 74, 76 control the flow of water into the respective dispensers 60, 62, 64 based on the operational cycle of the washing machine. It appears, based on the schematic shown in Figure 3 of Hardaway, that the various conduits 40, 42, 48, 66, 68, 70, which direct water from an external supply to the dispensers, and thus may be compared to the inlet hose recited in independent claims 1 and 9, are all either horizontally or vertically oriented with respect to the tub 34 and the washing machine. Hardaway neither discloses nor suggests that any of these conduits 40, 42, 48, 66, 68, 70, or any portion thereof, are oriented at a slant, as is the inlet hose recited in independent claims 1 and 9.

The Office Action asserts with respect to claims 3, 4, 11 and 12 that orienting the inlet conduits 40, 42, 48, 66, 68, 70 at a diagonal would have been obvious given Hardaway's disclosure of a slanted recirculating conduit 84. However, it is respectfully submitted that such a modification would not have been obvious. Hardaway's only disclosure regarding the recirculating conduit 84 is provided at column 3, line 41. The majority of Hardaway's disclosure is otherwise directed to the dissolution of high concentration washing and rinsing agents prior to initial introduction into the tub 34. Hardaway neither discloses nor suggests any requirement for or advantage to the diagonal positioning of the recirculating conduit 84. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that it would not have been obvious to modify any of the incoming water conduits 40, 42, 48, 66, 68, 70 to be oriented at a slant, as Hardaway neither discloses nor suggests any deficiency in how these conduits 40, 42, 48, 66, 68, 70 function in their current

horizontal/vertical orientation, nor any advantage to the slanted orientation of the recirculating conduit 84.

Additionally, Hardaway neither discloses nor suggests any connecting portions disposed at any portion of any of the conduits 40, 42, 48, 66, 68, 70, nor extending from any of the dispensers 60, 62, 26 or valves 44, 45, 72, 74, 76. For this additional reason, Hardaway neither discloses nor suggests an inlet hose and first and second hose connecting portions as recited in independent claims 1 and 9.

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 9 are not anticipated by Hardaway, and thus the rejection of independent claims 1 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Hardaway should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 2, 5-8, 10 and 13-16 are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claims 1 and 9, from which they respectively depend, as well as for their added features.

The Office Action rejects claims 3, 4, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hardaway. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Dependent claims 3, 4, 11 and 12 are allowable over Hardaway at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claims 1 and 9, from which they respectively depend, as well as for their added features. Further, it is respectfully submitted that the features recited in claims 3, 4, 11 and 12 would not have been obvious modifications to the washing machine disclosed by Hardaway. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 3, 4, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hardaway should be withdrawn.

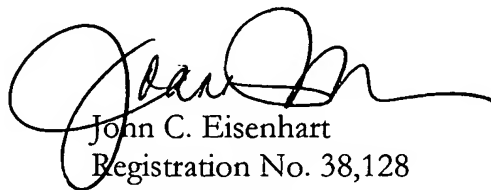
New claims 17-20 are added to the application. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 17-20 meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, and are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claims 1 and 9, from which they respectively depend, as well as for their added features.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, **JOANNA K. MASON**, at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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